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When decadence of a people sets in, when their strength and unity is undermined, invasion follows and they are taken over by a conqueror. In other words, no nation ever falls and no people were ever destroyed because of their peculiar religion. They are rather conquered because of the deterioration of its people from virtue. They expose themselves to invasion; unwittingly they invite it, and this is so for every people, even those who boast of the greatest material progress.

So that a Moses was able to justify his aggressions by reason of the idolatry and corruption of the Canaanites as people, not as worshippers of God. It is never a question of religion.

The great spiritual seers spoke not against religion but against the decadence into which they had fallen. They never spoke against the true religious spirit of any denomination or creed, but against the decadence into which they had fallen and deteriorated. But if they spoke of them at all, it was to warn of the decadence that eroded the true religious thought. A Christ did not speak against Judaism, a Lat-Tse spoke not against Confucianianism, a Buddha did not inveigh against any of the multitude of Aryan faiths. In Christ's own words: "I came not to call the righteous but sinners to repentance." (Mark II, 17). (See Luke, -P.1102 Modern Readers.) (I came not to deny but to fulfill the law). And Socrates: "I came not to destroy the gods but to purify their worship: See: Trial).

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the Priest come between the living God and man with their symbols. This, I am sure, will seem as barbaric madness to humanity except as they understand the use of the symbol. When we confuse the symbol —

all unhappiness, all unrest comes from our confusing of the symbol with the thing ~~as~~ itself. when we confuse the desire with the external object;

[we feel no separation. we exploit ourselves when we confuse thought with the

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philosophers who take great pride in the attempt to snatch a mote from the Infinite in order to subject it to their fanciful criticisms. As phantasmal as it may seem, there are many groups and societies who in the name of truth constantly attempt to disprove matters of no fundamental importance. Every now and then, the question as to whether or not Shakespeare is the author of the famous writings commonly ascribed to him becomes the subject of heated debate. Recently, a number of people belonging to such a society became so rattle-headed on this subjected that they decied to search for his grave in the hope of unearthing a little note telling of the real author. They hoped that an initiate might have dropped it into the grave during the funeral ceremony; an initiate who might have known the "facts". In their zeal, they proceeded with a mass-ecavation.

But before they were able to identify the grave of the great writer, the government had to stop them from plowing up the entire cemetery.

You may ask, what has all this to do with your question. It does in this respect; as far as the inner life is concerned, our direct affinity with it is so scattered and fragmentary that a correctness in understanding with others is in the majority of instances highly improbable.

But be of good cheer. Everything can teach us even if we do not derive the anticipated results thereof.

Am enclosing the poems you asked for and trust that they are the ones you described to me in your last letter.

as for your friend thinking himself to be an unbelieve

this does not mean that he has no belief of his own. His immediate desires which are most urgent within him certainly form his belief although he may never have questioned himself seriously about this matter. Usually, a person who fancies himself an atheist is one who rejects commonly accepted beliefs. But this is not difficult to understand. Words belonging to the category of God and truth have been so long abused by those whose interests have in the main been in contradiction to their words that now a sincere and realistic appreciation of their functional significance is usually dismissed. There remains little understanding of their functional significance symbolic quality.

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The term symbolic, of course, begs the question the approach to whose meaning, now somewhat obscure to us, lies in non-intermittent search in connection with the uncovering and unciphering of values. In order that the nature of our consciousness which, so important in all that we do and say, may become comprehensible to us, it is desirable that we attempt to realize the possibility for harmony and balance in ourselves; possibilities whose fluid and pliable properties never crystallized out in final precipitation.

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The psychic reaction productive of growth in the understanding of such questions as God and truth can never occur without profound feeling and emotion. This leads to understanding unless, of course, we are such keen exploiters of the obvious that the more revealing seldom, if ever, urges our attention. Infrequently do we direct sufficient attention to the meaning of our behavior; it is deemed more satisfying to concentrate upon immediate gratification and the means that will contribute thereto. We fail to see that all major beginnings and changes in life are difficult for us; that happiness is seldom realized without great effort.

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Generally people who believe themselves to be atheists and unbelievers are persons who cannot understand the simpler phenomena around and in them but who are always ready to master the difficult aspects of their environment by means of outright denials. I recollect just such a turn of idiosyncrasy in connection with a wealthy acquaintance of mine. He called himself an atheist and was the head of an organization that published its own periodical. In this magazine certain passages in the Bible were criticised and their authenticity questioned. Did such and such a saint perform a certain miracle when historically, he could not have done so at the time not having lived then? The existence of Christ as a person was questioned.

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Obviously, my friend who had written these passages was not and could not have been concerned with the full meaning of Christ, not as person vehicle of desires and emotions but as an impersonal expression of as magnificent wisdom as man can ever hope to achieve. This friend lacked knowledge and eagerness. Such qualities were decidedly lacking in the good gentlemen for while he has a nice person, he was apparently very suspicious of what he could not immediately understand.

This is merely an example of how a more primitive type of emotion can distort our views in creating narrow attitudes which too often are mistaken for thought. There are charlatan

p. 285 Dewey

The Quest for Certainty

"The philosophical tradition regarding knowledge and practice, the immaterial or spiritual and the material, was not original and primitive. It had for its background the state of culture which has been sketched. It developed in a social atmosphere in which the division of the ordinary and extraordinary was domesticated. Philosophy reflected upon it and gave it a rational formulation and justification."

The conception of the ultimate or antecedent real is not a creation of the culture of society was was always inherent in man. The thinking and feeling of the human entity. It underwent changes and development through the ages but essentially always held the same basic aim. From the very beginning of man he could not help but think of a god because of the God-instinct in him. He tried to make intelligible (to himself) that instinct. He tried to explain from the very beginning the God-instinct in him. He did not create a god as a non-existing reality since the seed-reality in him was driving him from the very beginning to seek it.

With the emergence of man, nature impressed him with such awe that primitive as he was, he thought of a God. But that he could be so impressed points to a supreme reality which through the suggestion of vast powers in natural phenomena implied to him the existence of an infinite greatness. That which is symbolized by the word God must have been instinctive knowledge in him, otherwise he could not have endowed anything in nature with omnipotence.

Mana, God, ultimate, infinite, universal- all these are but word sunstructions hinting at that supreme reality to which every path of human activity seems to lead.

God-instinct in man.

Prayer - for what we should pray.

The conception of the spiritual real is not the creation of a state of culture, ~~for it is~~ inherent in the thinking and ~~and feeling of all men whose~~ <sup>belonging</sup> who, in association, produces a state of culture or society. ~~can be supernatural, so called, he said to be,~~ Only incidentally, then, ~~is it, as Dewey writes,~~ the production of "a social atmosphere in which the division of the ordinary (relative) and extraordinary (absolute) was domesticated". ~~for~~ With the emergence of man he could not help but think of a god because of the god-instinct in him. From the very beginning he tried to make intelligible to himself that instinct, though ~~As he was able to do so, he~~ <sup>much</sup> it was the philosopher especially who "reflected upon it and gave it a rational formulation and justification." Though the conception of the immaterial real underwent change and development over eons of history, ~~man, the conceiver of gods,~~ <sup>during which</sup> was driven by the seed-reality in him to seek and to know the god enshrined in every temporal existence.

Why could early man be impressed with such awe that primitive as he was, he thought of a god? That he was so impressed points to a supreme reality which, ~~the~~ <sup>rough</sup> the suggestion of vast powers present in natural phenomena, implied to him the existence of infinite greatness. That greatness he symbolized by the word god, wisdom, or heaven which, ~~on the subjective side,~~ must have been instinctive knowledge in him; otherwise he could not have endowed anything in the objective world with omnipotence.

October 28th, 1947

P. 402. Cunningham.

~~There are some who hold~~  
~~This author makes the statement that belief in God is~~  
~~common among us all~~  
a quite natural belief, and that it is a mistake to suppose that  
the belief is an artificial creation of scheming priests or  
medicine-men who hoped, by its means to get control of the  
~~masses. But he gives no evidence for this statement other~~  
~~than to point to the commonness of this belief in various times~~  
and climes? *(AY) → 10-30-47*

A small soul has never been known to produce great ideas.  
It is ~~only~~ <sup>or uncertain</sup> gross-grained intellects, ~~.....~~ It is ~~small minds with~~  
~~clever intellects,~~ that will exploit great ideas and try to  
make them serve ~~their smaller personal motives.~~ Thus they  
~~are always used to~~ <sup>narrowly concerned persons</sup> ~~sordid~~  
~~will use a great ideas toward forwarding their narrow ends.~~ *(AH)*

This is not to say that the jews as a people worshipped any better than those which were called by them heathens. For the worship is not better than the worshippers, and the heathens of that time, as people, were not inferior to the Hebrews in the exodus in their moral behavior. But the jews had greater leaders though they had even to resort to the slaughter of thousands of jews to restore the rest to some semblance of moral behavior. Thus, the slaughter of the 24,000 jews for what it described as whoring with the Moabites.

Nor can the man of science forego the quest. The desideratum of knowledge of reality is not one's occupation, whether one is a scientist, or divine, a professor of a sacred or secular science. It is a commonplace of philosophy to assert that Greek - and therefore European - civilization was "saved from a religion of the oriental type by .... the existence of the scientific schools".

~~But~~ Europe is as little saved as it is lost and it will ever be so. We should be much more sparing of our ideas of saving and losing since we understand so little about it. If <sup>the</sup> proponents of the mystical religions of the orient were fully as powerful in our western school systems as some of the spouting philosophers, they would also say, in the same <sup>but with an opposite refrain</sup> vein, "Europe would have been lost by reason of science were it not for the mystery schools - Pythagoreanism, Orphism, the worship of Bacchus, etc." And they would be just as right!

You can neither be lost or saved: you can only grow or not grow. You can get home by infinite ways of circumloquition, or by a more direct line - a straight one. But home you must go as surely as all the waters of a river must flow downstream and not upstream. So with civilizations, whether eastern or western; they can either grow <sup>out of</sup> into self-rulership or relapse into self-seeking. And in the main, whether in the occident or orient, under anarchic, democratic, or despotic regimes, the great masses are <sup>usually</sup> always sacrificed by the selfish who would rule the world for their own ends - which become their own end or the end of themselves.

Compare the masses of the east which die through not having

Understanding will of itself come: one must go to it since it is the greater thing. One must exert himself.

God cannot come to us, therefore we must go to him. But the lesser is always drawn to the greater. The magnet draws the iron.

When man is not willing, the magnetism of god works against him, against his resistance, his home his property, his little gods.

And so the god in us must undergo million and millions of evolutions. Of what value is the great men? Only to himself has he worth. He is willing to make the effort to attain to god. If not, he cannot come to god, not as a god but as a friend.

Who is it who can truly ask; without mere  
curiosity; but with real effort, "Is there a god?"  
Only he who is godlike and he will not ask anymore.  
He will know; at first fleetingly; at rare intervals  
which are like piercing pains: then constancy will  
come.

"In God's good time says the  
selfish person.' But more to him  
when "God's good time" changes  
things.

~~Because of the following interpretation~~

Let us consider the lazy glow-worm who, confined in its tunnel, merely deserves to share there. Not knowing a brighter light since it is unwilling to expose itself by coming to the surface, the beetle may dream that it is not only 'light' that is the source of all light. Since the sunnings & self-illusion outside every thing else in its world, it may desire to be aware of any such force than itself. and when that dream has become habitual, it slips into the earthly chamber of greater ease into the one who in the little god ego) the one who in falling from his throne, was changed into the form of a body & a body with a tail, horns, and a cloven hoof by the god whom he tried to outshine but could not.

This dull all aspired to reach divinity by competition - by getting the best of each man and - by severing himself from all else or division - in ~~self~~ <sup>protection</sup> the songs & powers and so <sup>w self-reserve</sup> be multiplied. ~~so~~ all the species.

The nature of this sport proved self-destructive but the unchangeable love still divides the all those who have have allied themselves with the ~~great~~ or must become ~~bet~~ one against with us truth without compromise - with <sup>not</sup> any miracle save that of growth - without any bargain save that which one makes with ~~oneself~~ the unsuspected, more lucid self.

~~that we may not know it and the opposite,~~  
~~but we ~~simply~~ give away at the~~  
~~world's bazaar leaves three or~~  
~~one beggarman takes some of those~~  
~~articles which mark ~~the~~ the seal of the~~  
~~spurious, bring us spurious advantage. An~~

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